

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated September 7, 2006, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

The Examiner requests that Figs. 1-4 be labeled as "Prior Art", however, Applicants note that the Figures do not depict the prior art but rather an aspect of an embodiment of the present invention. Accordingly, Applicants do not alter the drawings in the response and respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection to the drawings.

Applicants have amended the abstract, and respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the objection. Applicants also amend claims 11-16 to clarify the claimed subject matter, thus Applicants respectfully request the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Applicants believe the foregoing discussion and amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

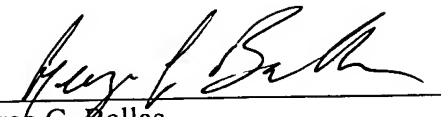
If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Application No.: 10/717,717

Docket No. 8734.261.00-US

Respectfully submitted,

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